

This honor is fitting for a woman who has worked so hard and touched so many lives in so many ways. Her teaching and her leadership have been dynamic. She has sought to bring out the best in the students and the best in the community by ensuring that the educational experience at P.S. 123K has been complete, engaging and dynamic.

Using her experience as an accomplished drama and music instructor, she worked to develop special initiatives such as Glee and Dance Clubs which perform city-wide. Her program has developed outstanding performers who enrich the community while improving themselves.

She has created and implemented essay, art and storytelling competitions within the school that has helped students tap into and expand their creative powers. Because of her efforts, students are participating in state, city and district-wide writing and art contests. The program she created boasts the citywide winner of the 1992 Storytelling Contest and the first place statewide winner of the 1993 SABC Essay Contest.

Ms. Spatola challenges students' thinking by holding school-wide celebrations which honor the rich and varied cultures and traditions reflected in the community. The celebrations honor Puerto Rico Discovery Day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and African-American History, Pan-American Day, as well as Asian, Italian, Jewish and Irish heritages. By exposing her students to these diverse traditions, she not only enhances their educational experience, but deepens the roots of the community and strengthens its fabric.

In addition to ensuring that students have the tools to succeed in the future, Ms. Spatola has worked to provide them with an inside view into the working world by creating a Career Conference Day. Through this initiative, students are able to meet with individuals from a variety of fields and a number of different occupations. This forum gives the students a chance to explore ideas and possibilities that exist for them, and find out the challenging and exciting futures that they can pursue.

All of these attributes make Ms. Spatola an important member of P.S. 123K and a valued member of our community. She stands out to all of us as a model for leadership and her contributions underscore the important role that educators play in the lives of our children and in the future of our communities. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Ms. Spatola and wishing her well as she continues to touch the future.

#### HONORING SEVEN ACRES JEWISH SENIOR CARE SERVICES

#### HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 11, 1999*

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care Services, which will celebrate the Sara Feldt Memorial Annual Older American's Day in recognition of Older American's Month. Many of Seven Acres' residents volunteer in schools and philanthropic organizations.

Seven Acres began in 1943, when a small, determined group of men and women of the Jewish faith purchased a frame house on

Branard Street in Houston. Their vision was to create a warm, friendly Jewish environment for 14 elderly citizens. As the concept and the need grew, there were milestone expansions. In 1954, a new facility with broader capabilities was built on Chimney Rock Road, initially serving 31 and eventually accommodating 98 residents. During the 1970's, planning began for a new and ambitious facility. By 1977, the present Seven Acres campus was dedicated to the mission of "Honor[ing] thy Father and thy Mother."

In 1998, a major renovation created today's modern campus. Throughout its history, Seven Acres has promoted a sense of satisfaction with life so that the humanity, dignity, independence, and strengths of each resident are realized to the fullest.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when America is aging and our parents are growing older, it is imperative that facilities like Seven Acres exist to care for the elderly. Our elderly are a tremendous asset and a source of great talent and inspiration. I commend them for their good works and Seven Acres for its great contributions to the community.

#### VETERANS APPRECIATION MONTH

#### HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 11, 1999*

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, the people of our Nation have great appreciation and admiration for the many men and women who have served this country in the armed forces to protect and preserve our freedom and safety and that of others across the globe. In addition to a debt of gratitude, our Nation has a long tradition of providing concrete assistance to veterans to readjust to civilian life, to find employment therein, and to buy a home. We owe even more to those veterans who became disabled as a result of their service to our Nation. That assistance we provide usually pays benefits back to our society manyfold as veterans utilize their hard-earned skills, discipline, and loyalty in civilian life and their communities.

To help promote the many valuable programs our Nation, States, localities, and the private sector have to assist veterans, many States, including my own State of California, have proclaimed "veterans appreciation months." May is Veterans Appreciation Month in California, so declared by Governor Gray Davis. I wish to draw the attention of the Congress to that declaration and to urge my colleagues and the Nation as a whole to do all that we can to assist our Nation's veterans, including utilizing the employment assistance programs operating by many States and in California by the Employment Development Department.

#### TAX FREEDOM DAY

#### HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 11, 1999*

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, today is Tax Freedom Day. This is the day when American

taxpayers have symbolically "paid off" their tax burden to the government and begin working for themselves.

The hard working men and women of this country are now working 131 days simply to pay their debt to the government. When Bill Clinton and AL GORE were first elected, Tax Freedom Day was April 30. Today, Tax Freedom day does not come until well into May. In fact, Americans are now working an additional eleven days before they can start bettering their own lives and the lives of their families.

To put it in basic terms, the average person who works an 8 hour day, actually works almost three hours just to pay their federal, state and local taxes! The simple fact is Americans pay more in taxes than food, clothing, shelter and transportation combined. It is time we put a stop to this and provide some much needed tax relief for American families. After all, a surplus is nothing more than an overpayment by taxpayers. We should give it back.

Mr. Speaker, we need to continue the fight for lower taxes. It is time to eliminate the estate tax, the marriage penalty tax, and provide a larger child tax credit and provide an across the board income tax cut. American families know best how to spend their money, not Washington bureaucrats.

#### TRIBUTE TO THREE "CALIFORNIA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS"

#### HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 11, 1999*

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three special schools in my district: West High School (Torrance, CA), Richardson Middle School (Torrance, CA), and Palos Verdes Peninsula High School (Palos Verdes, CA). These schools are among the 158 within the State of California that have earned the prestigious title "California Distinguished Schools" by the state's Department of Education.

My three schools were awarded the designation for their outstanding examples of teaching and learning. They have also incorporated strong teamwork and professional development components within the respective curricula. "Through the efforts of skilled and committed personnel, we can work even more efficiently to improve the educational system for your children," said Superintendent Delaine Eastin when bestowing the award.

The California State Department of Education began the California Distinguished Schools Program in 1985 to honor elementary and secondary schools in alternate years. To be eligible for the distinguished School title, a school must demonstrate a commitment to improve the quality of its educational services and performances. In this manner, it is an effective way of encouraging reform and does so in a manner that encourages local participation by those who matter most: parents, teachers, administrators, students.

I am a firm believer that education is the key to improving the lives of our children who are the future of this country. I am encouraged by the State's creativity in developing the Distinguished School concept and commend these three exceptional schools in my district for making a positive difference in the lives of our children and community.